THE

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION

Magazine.

DECEMBER, 1850.

Original Papers.

EMIGRATION FROM THE RAGGED SCHOOLS.

"The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men, gang aft a'gley."

So said poor Burns, and doubtless the expression bore a close reference to some sad chapters in his own chequered history. Not a few predicted a similar destiny for the Emigration Scheme of the Ragged Schools. They saw a bugbear in the way, and although they could neither "kill the foe, nor tell his name," yet they made it a sufficient reason for withholding their countenance and support.

The promoters of the scheme were fully conscious of the difficulties they would have to encounter, and the likelihood of individual failures, however carefully they selected the candidates. It was not expected that *every* ragged youth would become an industrious colonist with a greater degree of certainty than that of other men; or that in all cases they would be speedily reconciled to a *Bushman's* life and labour. The hardships common to a Bushman in the wilds of Australia, are very different from those endured by an "Arab of the City;" and lads accustomed to the friction and excitement of metropolitan life, could not be reconciled in a day to a life of comparative solitude and constant toil. Early habits, affections, and prejudices, were all antagonistic at the commencement of such a life. Widely removed, in most cases fortunately so, from their early associations and pernicious pleasures, it was not to be expected they would forget them at once, or forego them without a sigh. The extravagant expectations, (common to inexperienced youth,) which many of them formed respecting the colonies, would operate unfavourably on sanguine minds. Nor was it to be hoped that even when good resolutions were formed, and the existence of better principles apparent,

that every lad would remain impervious to temptation, or become equally successful in the new enterprise. The arrangements at the outset were also, to a great extent, imperfect, both as to the transmission of emigrants from this country, and their arrival in the colonies; nor was it possible to render them more complete under the *then* existing circumstances. No new scheme is made perfect in a day, and, like the Ragged School system itself, the Emigration scheme required to *grow* into a state of maturity.

Those who duly considered these and similar difficulties, were prepared to hear of failures among the young colonists, but certainly not of ultimate failure in the scheme itself. The disgraceful flogging on board the *Ramilies*, of which one of the Ragged School children came in for a share, is sufficiently notorious. But were we to publish all we know respecting this matter, it would be seen, that the unfortunate children who were punished were not so guilty as the worthless parties who inflicted it.

There is one circumstance connected with this matter, of which we are anxious to acquaint our readers, as in several instances it has led to a very serious misunderstanding. It is well-known, at least by some, that within the last few years, numbers of the young paupers belonging to the workhouses have emigrated to the colonies. Some of these were in the vessel above-named, and also in one or two others in which the Ragged School children embarked. Now, as we are perfectly ignorant of the amount of moral and religious training which these workhouse children received, and of their moral and industrial capabilities for a colonial life, we wish not to be understood as saying one word derogatory to the arrangements of the guardians, or the character of the children who participated in the bounty. All we wish to do is simply to place the emigrants from each class on their own footing, and bear the amount of praise or blame which their conduct merited. But in several instances this has not been the case. It seems to have become an established rule to place all the virtues and vices, failures and successes, of the juvenile poor who have emigrated from London, to the credit of the Ragged Schools. We can easily perceive how mistakes of this nature would occur, considering the immense numbers of children who "pass through" the Ragged Schools in the winter season, when on their way to the workhouse—the universal notoriety of the one effort, and the comparative privacy of the other. The consequence has been, that the faults and failures of other children have been attributed to those from the Ragged Schools, both when on board ship, and after reaching their destination. A case lately occurred, in which a number of lads, who had occasionally attended a Ragged School, were sent to America by the parochial authorities. Not one of them came under the cognizance of the Committee of the Ragged School Union, nor were they aware of the circumstance until after the youths had embarked. But we have lately been receiving letters from various quarters, intimating that some of the lads who emigrated *from the Ragged Schools* have returned to this country, and that most of those who remain are likely to "defeat the object for which they were sent

out," and this chiefly on account of defective arrangements at the outset. We consider it a duty to make known these facts, in order to correct a misconception in the minds of those who may have been led to identify the emigration of all poor children with the Ragged Schools.

And now a word respecting the Emigrants' Letters. Those we have published have been found so accurate, so interesting, and in many cases so well written, that some persons have been led to question their authenticity. It has been with them a matter difficult to solve, as to whether those letters received their *finish* in the colonies or in London. Some have supposed that either the young *Bushmen* must have employed an amanuensis, or their original communications must have passed through an emigrants'-letter-manufactory in Exeter Hall. In neither of these propositions, however, can we concur. We do not think that "letter-writers" are so numerous in the wilds of Australia, as in the courts and lanes of Westminster or St. Giles's; and we are perfectly assured, that every letter we have published has been purely authentic—written in their own handwriting, and dictated by themselves. For our own part, we can most positively affirm that few and unimportant have been the alterations we have made, and these chiefly in the spelling. In some instances, the letters have been sent to the printer as they were taken from the bosoms of their attached mothers, who were proudly preserving them as the latest memorials of their emigrant sons—more loved now, because more distant. Sometimes we have cancelled an unimportant expression, or repetition, when the letters were in proof, but in others, except the spelling, they have been printed just as received. We think it is easy to account for their very interesting character. The youths have adopted the true method of letter-writing. They endeavour to *talk* on the paper. With hearts full of gratitude and affection, they tell their distant friends what they see, feel, and remember, just as they would have done had they been present with them. We have heard some of these very youths give an account of their previous history, as accurate and interesting as any letter we have published; and we do not know why they should not be able to *write* their thoughts with equal correctness. In one or two instances there has been a departure from original simplicity, and an effort made at fine writing, which has evidently been prompted by an unusual amount of natural talent, which poverty and hardships have failed to destroy. We believe there may yet appear from among these neglected outcasts, some possessing the germs of intellectual power and beauty, which, if rightly guided, developed, and sanctified, may place them among God's nobility, "the excellent of the earth," and the benefactors of mankind! To prove that this is no mere theory, we insert the following admirable letter, printed from the original copy, (bearing the Australian post mark,) and neither corrected in spelling nor in diction. This is certainly a severe ordeal, to which even public journalists would not willingly submit; but the young emigrant has no reason to be ashamed of his epistle. The gratuitous teacher from whom he received the greater portion of his education, especially

in writing, certifies that the letter is written in the boy's *own handwriting*:—

"*On the Torrens, Adelaide, South Australia, January 12th*, 1850.

"DEAR SIRS AND GENTLEMEN,—I take this opportunity of writing to you, to inform you of my safe arrival in the colony, and of my being in good health.

"I have verry great pleasure in being able to inform you that I have every reason to be thankfull for my change of situation, and I do not doubt but that you will participate in my feelings when I consider the interest and kindness with which you acted towards me, and that you will be pleased to hear of my welldoing.

"I have to inform you, gentlemen, that my carreer in the colony has hithertoo been a verry prosperous one. I have been engaged at verry good wages ever since I landed, and have no fear of want, for there is no necessity of the industrious being idle. Such is the demand for boys, that were five hundred to be landed next week, they would all find employment in a few days; and, if I was to give advice to the boys and girls attending our schools, the best I can think of would be—Emigrate to South Australia. Leave the land of want and misery, where you get but half a bellyfull—and that uncertain—and come here, where beef and bread has long ago kill'd that arch fiend *want* with vexation. Remember you can emigrate for nothing, boys. And with kind friends at home to care for your comfort on the passage out, the journey out is one of positive pleasure instead of danger and discomfort. And here I must tender my sincere thanks to the gentlemen who so liberally provided for my comfort on the passage, and beg to assure them that I found myself provided with everything necessary to my comfort and convenience. I must not forget to inform you that I received the appointment of *Doctor's Assistant* on board the vessel, for which I ought to have received two pounds on landing, but through some mismanagement on the part of the doctor, I got nothing. I have good reason for thinking that he received the money and kept it himself. I hope, gentlemen, you will inform the boys and girls of the schools that if they come here they must not be surprised to find that Christmas is the hottest time in the year, and that we never have any frosts, and that the trees are green all the year; that the natives are very harmless and very black; and that instead of frosts in the winter we have only rains. I have written 2 letters to my friends, and shall be verry glad to hear of their safe arrival; but in case they have not received them, I hope you will be so kind as to show this to them, and tell them I am anxious to hear from them as soon as possible. I hope you will inform the scholars that I have been bullock driving since I first landed, and that I soon got into the way of the thing, and that if they intend to come here, they must not frighten themselves with the apprehension of difficulties they may never encounter. Daniel Kale is engaged the same way in another part of the country, and I believe he is doing verry well.

"And now, my dear friends, I must conclude with a sincere wish that God in his goodness may watch over you *all* for your preservation. And for your many kindnesses to me, I sinceerly hope that *He* in whose hands is life and death may long spare you to labour in the good work; may He bless you with prosperity and peace in this life, and may you be his in the life to come.

"To my friends, Messrs. Mountstephen, Tawell, Ware, Tite, Payne, Smith, Tomkins, Matthews, Jackson, Steward, Circuit, Grovenor, Vanderkiste; and to the ladies of the committee—Mrs. Mountstephen, Mrs. Jackson, Mrs. Leech, Miss Leech, and Miss Lacy, and Miss Hughes,

I beg to tender my most sincere thanks and remembrances, and to wish God bless you all, and to receive my assurances that I shall ever remember your names with respect and gratitude.

"I beg to remain, ladies and gentlemen,

"Yours with gratitude, GEORGE COLEMAN."

"P. S. It may be satisfactory to the ladies and gentlemen to whom this is addressed to know that the youth, George Coleman, has been in my employ from the time he first landed, and that hitherto he has given satisfaction, and so far as I am able to form an opinion, he appears to be sober, honest, and industrious; and I beg to assure you that I feel proud to be able to give you this satisfactory account of one of your pupils, as I feel a warm interest in the object of your Society.

"*River Torrens.*" "PETTY J. MATTHEWS."

In most of the letters we have received, a very noticeable and gratifying feature appears, in the remarkable affection they manifest for their absent relatives and friends. Happy and comfortable in every other respect, having abundant employment and liberal remuneration, pleased with the nature of their employment, and also with their employers, the only thing that seems to mar their happiness is the absence of their parents and relatives. Nor does this arise from the recollections of parental fidelity, and the comforts of their former homes; for those very expressions of affection sometimes terminate with a gentle rebuke to a drunken mother, warning her of the consequences, and beseeching her, for the sake of her younger children, to discontinue the destructive practice; thus reminding us of the words of the poet, that, notwithstanding all her faults, to them—

"A mother is a mother still,
The holiest thing alive."

We have heard beautiful theories propounded at Ragged School meetings, by philanthropic gentlemen, who have surveyed an imaginative panorama of the "alley world," and its ragged denizens, in their own parlours, but who have never set a foot in a Ragged School or a "Visitor's District." We have heard them speak of "these poor creatures" as being "like another race of beings," alike in feeling as in sentiment. But facts such as those we have stated, prove, that under a ragged exterior beats many a filial and affectionate heart—an affection which cannot be destroyed, even by a mother's cruelty; and which, if timely acted upon by a wise course of moral and religious training, cannot fail to produce the best results.

THE ARAB OF THE CITY,

BEING THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A LONDON THIEF.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CAREER OF CRIME.

AFTER the dispersion of Spiven's gang, I went and took lodgings at No. 8, C—— Street, Drury Lane, which was (and is to this day) a well-known lodging-house, where the worst of characters resort to. Here I got acquainted with several daring thieves, and shofle pitchers, (passers of bad coin,) cracksmen, (housebreakers,) and others, who soon perceived I was

expert in a small line, and induced me to go out with them. I had tolerable good success, which was very encouraging; I was sometimes the "tool," and sometimes the "stall," or "nark." Our profession was "moll tulers," (or ladies' pickpockets.) We were generally well-dressed, and carried on our practices at dusk, mostly then about Chelsea, Pimlico, and Hyde Park. My first imprisonment was for this cause (after leaving the gang.) Myself and another were looking in at a fruiterer's shop, at the corner of Grosvenor Row, Pimlico, in the month of November; just as it was dusk, we observed an elderly lady put some gold and silver change into a purse, and then put it into her reticule; she came out, and we followed her into Eaton Square. I then knocked her against the railings of the Square, and my "pal" cut the strings of the reticule, and he ran off, while I gave her another push or two, to frighten her, and to prevent her hollowing after us. I then ran off in another direction from my "pal," and in turning round a corner of the Square, a policeman caught me in his arms. The old lady came up, and I was taken to Ebury Square Station House. I was then remanded for a week, in order to apprehend, if possible, my "pal;" but he could not be found, and I was liberated, as I was not known to the police in that division, and the lady would not press the charge against me. The sum was £15. 15*s*. I then returned to my old lodgings, and from that time acquired the nick-name of Lucky Bill Rednight. Pursuing the old game, I frequented the theatres, especially Drury Lane, and used the dress circle, and amongst the gentry there we used to reap a good harvest; we borrowed the opera-glasses at times, and never returned them; jewellery, trinkets, etc., were within our reach when the spectators were looking on the acting, and on leaving, these articles, watches, etc., we could extract without much trouble. My pal at last got "nailed," while I escaped. It was for a gold repeater watch, valued at twenty-five guineas. He was a daring chap, named John Gordon, of highly respectable parents, and well-educated. He had the appearance of a gentleman of about forty years of age, and I used to pass as his son. He got ten years from Hicks's Hall. Now my pal and best friend was gone, I had to take up another line of roguery, which was shofle pitching. Here I spent some six months at that game; but it was not a profitable concern. There was a deal of risk for a very little profit; the "pieces" (money) were generally half-crowns; they cost 4*d*. each, and after buying 3*d*. worth, or from that to 6*d*. worth, of anything, there was not much profit, as we only look for about 1*s*. 6*d*. profit off each half-crown. Perhaps we might get two or three "crabbed" (spoiled or cut in half) in a day, which would be a great loss to us; and the average "passings" would be only four or six per day; while at "buzzing" we might get a skin (a purse,) with from £1 to £20 in it, besides notes, or "flimsies," as we call them, which we could dispose of as follows: for £5 we could get £4, for £10, £6, for £20 only about £10, so if we got a £200 note it would fetch sometimes only £40 or £50.

I had now been living with a young woman nearly three years; but she was not aware how I got my money. I never took her into company with me; we had a room or two furnished; both myself and herself were clothed well, and I used to tell her that I was a kind of agent in the city. Thus I continued to impose on her for nearly four years. During that time I had been four times in prison for felony, but I attributed my absence to "sprees," pleasure trips, etc., as my pals used to have "benefits," "raffles," etc., to raise money, till at last, through the police, I was "bowled out." I now left off the "pitching" game as worthless and degrading, and took up with three others as cracksmen. Shortly after, we were taken in a house in Oxford Street, on the 19th January, 1845; here I got three months in Tothill Fields. Then I resolved that I would not do anything

in a paltry line; if even I got "lagged," it had no terrors for me. To be "lagged" among thieves, is the greatest honour which can be conferred on them for a crime. But my resolution was not to have effect; two out of the three others were soon after "lagged," one for ten years, and the other fifteen years, for highway robbery in Smithfield, for robbing a printer and severely beating him over the head with a crowbar. I was not with them at this time, having refused to join them for that purpose. Thus I was mercifully spared their fate. But my course of sin and wickedness was now drawing to a close.

About two months after this last account, myself and two others were in a house in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden. We had got into an empty house, got on the roof, and over two other houses, to the one we had been watching for some time previous. We lifted up and took out four or five slates on the roof; I put in my arm and took off the bell, which some persons hang on their doors and windows. We removed the shutter and got in. This was the attic, with no person living in it. We had to go down stairs in the dark; having lost our silent matches we could not get a light, and were in a fix. We opened the stair-door and trod on the cat, who was lying on the mat, we suppose, which made a row. The two servants spoke to each other about it, cursing the cats for their noise. This was about two in the morning. We stood still a short time, and then went down to the next floor, with the intention of getting into the counting-house, where we hoped to find a rich booty. The master of the house had the toothache, or something similar to it, for he was pacing the bedroom up and down from the pain, as we distinctly heard him groan as if in pain. Here we sat, the three of us, for about an hour, and as it was in the month of May it was beginning to get light; but the master did not sleep. We therefore retraced our steps, again passed the servants' door, and heard them snoring. We opened, with the aid of our picklocks, a large closet filled with linen, (snow, as we call it,) and nearly emptied it. It was now by this time quite light. We left, and in getting over the other two houses we were espied by a servant girl, who gave an alarm, but we did not know it. The police were on the watch, and we were captured, handcuffed, and, after examination at Bow Street, committed for trial at the Old Bailey sessions. This was my first appearance there, and on the 10th of May, 1846, I was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment, which I served in Cold Bath Fields' Prison. After the expiration of my imprisonment, I had recourse to my old line of life. My actions were so narrowly watched, that as I was so well-known, I have been apprehended and sent to prison three different times on suspicion of felonious intentions. The young woman that I was living with, I now induced to go out along with two other girls "shoplifting." This was very hard to her at first, but I persisted in forcing her, so that in course of time she was an adept at it. She was apprehended in August, 1847, and convicted for it; and again in January, 1848, for a like offence. She was also four times apprehended, but not committed. I then got married to her in 1848; I thought that by doing so I might have better "luck;" that was my idea at that time, but I soon found out to the contrary.* I was engaged with three more at "cracking a crib" (housebreaking) in Nicholas Lane, City. Here we were alarmed and surprised by the police, who gave us beefment (that is, "stop thief," and chasing.) I was captured on London Bridge, and, after

* To my own knowledge, in London hundreds are living in the same way, their men forcing them either to prostitution, or shoplifting, or highway robbery. Very few thieves support their women entirely, and very few of them are married to the women, living with them till separated by transportation or some other cause.

two remands, acquitted. One of my pals threw some plate over the bridge, but two of them got three months each at City Bridewell.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BRAND PLUCKED OUT OF THE FIRE.

I still continued to carry on my old game, till it pleased God one day for me to fall in with one of my old companions, that I had not seen for some months, who informed me that a Missionary was sending, or going to send, all the thieves in London who would choose to go to Australia, or any other part that they would wish. He invited me to call upon the gentleman, who, he said, was such a nice, kind man, who would do all in his power to assist such as me and others of the same class of persons. I promised to call upon Mr. Jackson, (the missionary,) which I did the next day, and was informed that if I was willing to give up my thieving habits he would assist me, with the others, to emigrate. I felt rather a disinclination to reveal my whole character to him, as I was afraid that he might be in communication with the police authorities, and thereby endanger me. But I informed him that I was willing to give up my wicked practices, and abide by his instructions, if he would send me out. I accordingly attended his meetings, and I was at the one at which Lord Ashley was present in Goodman's Yard; and on one gentleman advocating the necessity of prayer, I felt that it was not necessary for our temporal wants, and thought that we did not come there to be religious, but only to be sent out as emigrants. But hardened as I was by sin, yet through the admonitions of the Missionary, I felt differently to what I previously did, although then I was on my old game; till after attending about three weeks at his meetings in the Irish Free School, I resolved that I would not thieve any more. This I adhered strictly to; afterwards I left off swearing, (for I was a shocking blasphemer of God's holy name,) besides many other vices that I was addicted to. But I did it all in my own strength, and therefore soon found out I was wrong; for although I did not thieve again, I would at times swear furiously, and thought nothing of it, but that I would do better in future. Such was the state of my mind at that time, but it pleased God, by his Holy Spirit, to enlighten my dark mind; then I saw before me such an awful amount of sin and wickedness that I had committed, that it laid heavy on my heart. I felt quite cast down, but I could not tell what was the matter with me; though I knew I was a very sinful creature, yet I did not think that sin was the occasion of my being unhappy. Then I looked back to my past course of life, to the greatest vices that I had committed, the blasphemies that I had uttered, for I had often said that there was neither God, hell, or devil; then I thought on the souls who through my instrumentality might have gone to perdition—on my own wife, whom I had forced to commit crime,—all crowded together on my mind. Then I began to cry in the bitterness of my soul to God, to cleanse me. Oh, the misery I endured!—that such a guilty creature as me should be pardoned, I thought was next to impossible. I then brought my wife to hear Mr. Jackson's exhortations; then I found out that all must be saved through the blood of Christ; I had till then been trusting partly on my own merits and good works to save me. I took a pleasure in attending the Irish Free School to hear the missionaries' addresses, which were especially then to young men; and by the grace of God, I was led to yield myself up entirely to his will, to forsake my former haunts and companions, and to come out from among them. By this time many of my old companions knew that I was serving the Lord, and they used to mock and laugh at me, calling me "Methodist," and such like names; and because I reproved

them for swearing, etc., they only persisted so much the more. I have endeavoured to induce many of my former companions to attend the Irish Free School, but they have not attended so well as I would have wished. Many happy hours have I there spent in hearing God's holy word explained to us; many of us poor outcasts of society have had reason to bless Almighty God, that we have ever heard Mr. Jackson's discourses. Many I have known have returned to their friends, and to their parents' home, to speak of the goodness of God in raising up such a man. But for him I never should have known that I had a Saviour who was loving my soul; but for him I might have been transported, there to be in slavery, and more hardened in sin; and but for him my wife would never perhaps have known her state by nature. But now, blessed be God, through his instrumentality, she has through grace been enabled to give up her sinful and vicious habits, to acknowledge her wickedness to that God whom she has so justly offended; her heart, which before was like a stone, is now melted; she sees her want of a Saviour, who died for the sins of the world; she now is trusting in Jesus' blood to wash her sins away: such is her state of mind now, and I trust that ere long she may have the witness of the Spirit to bear witness with her spirit, that she is a child of God. O may that missionary's life long be preserved to be the means of rescuing many, such as we have been, from the ways of sin and death, to the way of life everlasting! May he be a useful and profitable servant in the vineyard of our Lord Jesus Christ, and an honour to the London City Mission, is the humble, but sincere prayer, of one who feels that Christ is precious to his soul. To God be all the praise! CHARLES HEATH.

THE DUBLIN RAGGED SCHOOL.

TWENTY years ago, a Christian lady, when collecting funds for the Bible Society, walked through one of the miserable back streets of Dublin. She was ill-treated and even assaulted by the uncivilized inhabitants; but she immediately determined, with God's help, to attempt the improvement of these people by establishing a Ragged School in that very street. At first it was a Day School, and the numbers increased until 100 adults, 70 boys, and as many girls attended. Here might be seen the same hungry pallid faces which frequent our own schools in London, and, as in many instances with ourselves, it was found absolutely necessary to supply bread as well as instruction.

At length, in 1839, *two Roman Catholic girls* begged that a Sunday School might be opened, and it was commenced accordingly; but until 1846, no regular voluntary teachers attended it. The famine in that year was the occasion of forming a proper Committee for the management of the school, and the good work was carried on in a room which might be called a cellar, where more than a hundred people at a time were congregated to hear the gospel of Christ. When we are expressly commanded in Scripture to imitate the example of the good Samaritan, we do not ask the man's name, and here the name of this good lady is withheld only by her particular desire; but she found assistance and encouragement both from God and man, until at length, in 1849, the school made a great step forward. By the generosity of a gentleman, well-known in Ireland for his liberality, a spacious building was secured for the small sum of £250, and £12 a year rent, and in this building I found a very large assemblage, in which God doubtless has many of his own elect. One of the rooms is better suited for its purpose than any belonging to our similar institutions in London, the second is rather dark and confined, but the third has in its appearance all the well-known features of a Ragged School. On one occasion, I found present on the Sunday 155 boys, 121 girls, and 249 adults, total 525, besides a large number of children in arms. There were only 25 classes, giving an average of 25 each, though in one of them I counted 45 adults under the instruction of a single teacher. We must look up to this school as to a sort of parent establishment, for none of our own claim a like antiquity; but whilst we bless God that such an institution should have been

begun, and pray him to prosper it, a few remarks may not be out of place upon the improvements which are required. That there is so small a number of voluntary teachers even on Sunday, and none I believe on week days, is very discreditable to Protestant Dublin; and this was only partially accounted for to me by Mr. Blood, one of the indefatigable supporters of the school, who mentioned that but few of the large shops and mercantile establishments of the town employ Protestant clerks and shopmen, and that these men themselves are very unsettled and migratory, seldom remaining long in their situations. The praiseworthy teachers who do attend are surrounded by their classes in such an inconvenient manner, that out of an hour's teaching, each person can hear scarcely more than ten minutes, as the teacher's back is continually turned on a great part of the class. This is a necessary consequence of the extremely crowded state of the rooms, and the very small proportion of teachers. The bread given out during the school hours on Sunday causes some confusion, and distracts the attention from the main object of the institution. The paid male teachers do not seem sufficiently energetic in such a glorious field of labour, and I believe that better ones are desired, though in Dublin it is even more difficult to obtain these than in London, and instructors for the new industrial classes are still wanted by the Committee.

Until lately, Mr. Halliday kindly took charge of the singing of the school, but during his absence the praise of God appears to have been wholly laid aside as a regular duty and privilege. It is to be hoped, that when the present excellent superintendent shall have had a little more experience in such matters, he will see that much may be taught in singing, beside what is learned in reading, and that the voice of the thankful adoration bursts forth into louder accents than those of prayer, for a Christian can only be dumb when he is deaf to the Word of God. The children and adults attending the Lurgan Street School, are all of the thoroughly ragged class, but the number of criminals forms a very small proportion compared with that to be seen in our own schools. About four hundred are Roman Catholics, chiefly adults, and every exertion is made to give them the pure truth during their short weekly visit to its fountain—the Word. There is also a Bible Class, for all ages, once a week; and altogether the labours in this particular portion of God's vineyard seem well directed, and to the proper end—the salvation of souls. Much praise is due to the energetic Committee now at the head of the institution, and honour to those who originated and carried on the plan; and if any of our readers should happen to be in Dublin, they will derive profit and pleasure, and will give encouragement, by visiting the school on Sunday, which may easily be found by asking for "The Linen Hall." J. M.

Literary Notices.

Nineveh; its Rise and Ruin: as illustrated by Ancient Scriptures and Modern Discoveries. By the Rev. JOHN BLACKBURN. Fscp. 8vo., pp. 232. London: Partridge & Oakey, Paternoster Row.

To trace the causes which involved the magnificence and premature decay of the mighty empires of the past, is a task for which the Christian philosopher is eminently qualified. His labours, however, seldom awaken such general interest, as when devoted to a city so well-known as Nineveh. Born in a Christian land—the Bible an every-day book—the events which render its name famous mingle with our earliest recollections, and surround its ancient remains with a charm which novelty alone would have failed to impart.

For upwards of two thousand five hundred years, huge mounds of earth and rubbish stretched, like a funereal pall, over the once rejoicing city—its ruins had disappeared, its site was forgotten, and Nineveh was known only by name. The pen of the historian had not preserved its annals, nor the skill of the architect perpetuated its greatness. A few vague notices by one or two early historians were its only memorials, except those contained in the Holy Scriptures; and, with that scepticism to which man in all ages has been too prone, there were not wanting

those who dared to question its existence, and resolve the traditions respecting it into the dreams and fancies of an imaginative and wonder-loving people. But, to use the words of our author —

"As God in nature treasured up at the foundations of the earth, and in the caverns of the everlasting hills, the fossil remains of extinct races, to be brought forth to testify to the fact of creation against the atheistical speculations of certain modern philosophers—so, in his all-wise Providence, he has preserved beneath 'huge mounds, apparently of mere earth and rubbish,' memorials of that mighty people of whom Balaam prophesied, to whom Jonah preached, and amongst whom Ezekiel beheld the visions of the Almighty—to demonstrate the positive truth of ancient history, in opposition to the doctrine of the Mythus, and to prove the accuracy of the statements of the Sacred Writings against specious theories, which are so welcome to a sceptical and gainsaying generation."

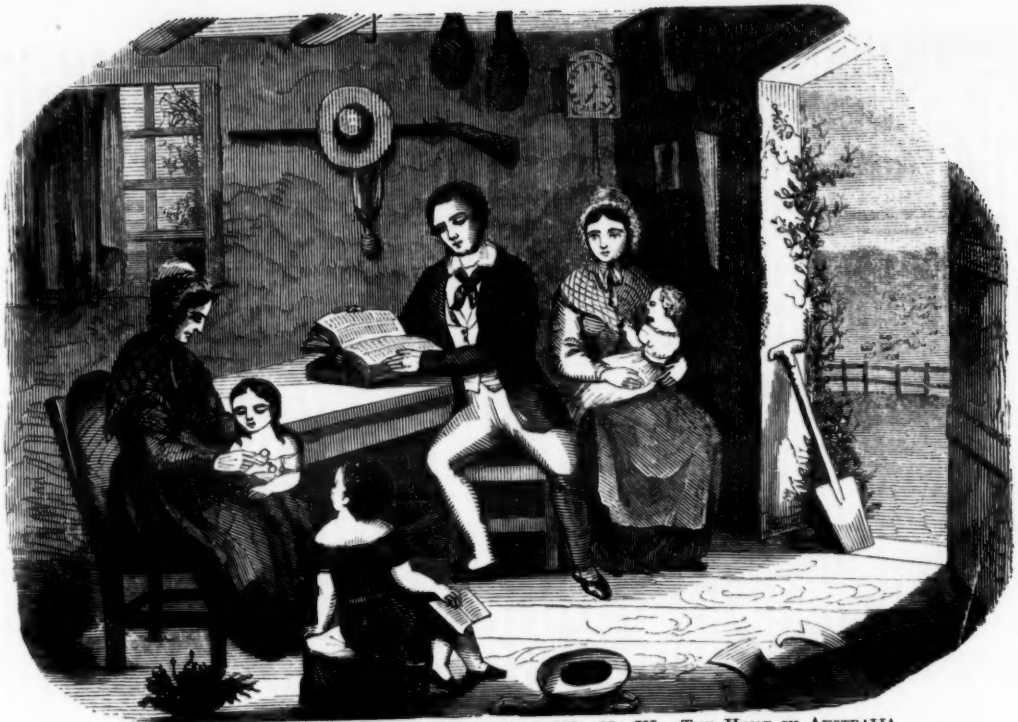
These large mounds had often attracted the attention of travellers; but it was reserved for Mons. Botta and Dr. Layard, to prosecute those investigations, which have determined the site of the ancient city, and revealed such magnificent palaces, beautiful sculptures, and exquisite works of art, as fully prove the high civilization and refinement of its inhabitants. Inscriptions have been discovered on many of these, mostly written in the cuneiform or arrow-headed character, in the decypherment of which progress has already been made, and they will doubtless contribute much to our knowledge of Assyrian history and customs.

From the position of the Holy Land, between the two great empires of the East, Egypt and Assyria, its friendship or occupation became an important point in their foreign policy. This fact, connected with the many other references to Assyria in the Scriptures, render the recent discoveries in that great country of the utmost value. They confirm the testimony of the Jewish historians, and illustrate various passages and customs, hitherto imperfectly understood or doubtfully explained. One of these is thus alluded to, and as showing the mistakes of learned commentators, and the accuracy of the prophet's knowledge of the country, is curious and instructive:—

"Ezekiel mentions, that he was commanded by the Spirit to take a tile, and engrave on it a representation of the city of Jerusalem besieged by her enemies, and invested on every side, (chap. iv. 1—3.) 'We may observe,' says an able commentator on this text, 'that God often suits prophetical types and figures to the genius and education of the prophets themselves. So the figures which Amos makes use of are generally taken from such observations as are proper to the employment of a shepherd or a husbandman. Ezekiel had a peculiar talent for architecture, so several representations are suitable to that profession. And they that suppose the emblems here made use of to be below the dignity of the prophetical office, may as well accuse Archimedes of folly for making lines in the dust.' Nor did our own incomparable Matthew Henry understand the allusion better than those objectors. He observes, 'It was Jerusalem's honour, that while she kept her integrity God had engraven her upon the palm of his hands, but now the faithful city had become a harlot, a worthless, brittle tile or brick is thought good enough to portray it on.' Ingenious and beautiful as this antithesis unquestionably is, yet it is not true, for the prophet employed the material then commonly in use for public records. Had that unostentatiously learned and most able commentator possessed the advantages which modern expositors enjoy, resulting from the extensive researches of travellers in Assyria, he would have known that the Assyrians engraved inscriptions and devices upon tiles, bricks, and cylinders of clay, while yet in a plastic state, and which afterwards being baked in a furnace, faithfully retained the impression, without the loss of a single character, for centuries. Undesigned coincidences like this, must assure us that this book of prophecy is both genuine and authentic."

The above may be taken as a specimen of the many interesting facts collected in these Lectures. They display an intimate acquaintance with the works of ancient and modern writers, abound with just and elevating thoughts, and are written in a popular style, and a calm philosophical spirit. The lessons conveyed are calculated to advance the cause of religion and morality amongst us, and to warn us, by the judgments of God upon the mighty nations of old, to "labour and pray that wickedness may be restrained, and that God may be glorified amongst us."

We regret that our space will prevent us giving even an outline of the contents of this instructive volume. It is a complete summary of our knowledge of the subject on which it treats. It will be found a valuable auxiliary to those who, whether as ministers, missionaries, or teachers, are engaged in explaining the Word of God; as an addition to the Sunday School Library, it is likely to be a favourite with the elder scholars; whilst its elegant appearance will justify its selection as a Christmas or New Year's present, by those who desire to increase the study of those Sacred Writings, a conviction of the truth of which it cannot fail to strengthen.



SCENES IN THE HISTORY OF A RAGGED BOY.—No. VI.—The Home in Australia.

Editor's Portfolio.

THE CALLS ARE SO MANY.

I ASKED a wealthy lady once, who thought she gave a great deal away in charity, to keep an accurate account for one year of all she gave away, particularly to the religious charities; (which are those that are most complained of:) and I predicted that she would find, at the close of the year, that her donations had been less than she imagined. She did so; and at the end of the year came to me, and said she was perfectly ashamed to find that she had *spent* so much, and *given* so little. She found that the calls *were not* "so very many."

If the calls are so many, this importunity will not last long. Not more than seventy or eighty years does it ever continue. If it be an annoyance, you can bear it a few years. In eternity you will never receive these or any other calls. I knew several rich men whose *last calls* were made on them in 1833. (*How many in* 1849?)

Do these calls pester you? They bless others. Yonder is a poor woman, reading the Bible which your money paid for. And there is another, weeping over a tract which she owes to your donation. And there is a third, blessing the good people that support domestic missions; and there is a heathen mother, who, perhaps, would have immolated her child, if your contribution had not helped to send her the Gospel. Do you hear that young man? How well he preaches! You assisted to educate him. Dear friends, do not complain, but welcome every call; treat all the agents with civility, and do as much as you in any way can for the various benevolent objects; for "the time is short."—*Dr. Nevins.*

RECIPROCAL SYMPATHY.

NEARLY half a century ago, when a coach ran daily between Glasgow and Greenock, by Paisley, on a forenoon, when a little past Bishopton, a lady in the coach noticed a boy walking barefooted, seemingly tired, and struggling with tender feet. She desired the coachman to take him up, give him a seat, and she would pay for it. When they arrived at the inn in Greenock, she inquired of the boy what was his object in coming there. He said he wished to be a sailor, and hoped some of the captains would engage him. She gave him half-a-crown, wished him success, and charged him to behave well. Twenty years after this, the coach returning to Glasgow in the afternoon, on the same road, when near Bishopton, a sea-captain observed an old lady on the road, walking very slow, fatigued and weary. He ordered the coachman to put her in the coach, as there was an empty seat, and he would pay for her. Immediately after, when changing horses at Bishopton, the passengers were sauntering about, except the captain and old lady, who remained in the coach. The lady thanked him for his kindly feeling toward her, as she was now unable to pay for a seat. He said, "He had always sympathy for weary pedestrians, since he himself was in that state when a boy, twenty years ago, near this very place, where a tender-hearted lady ordered the coachman to take him up, and paid for his seat." "Well do I remember that incident," said she; "I am that lady, but my lot in life has changed. I was then independent; now I am reduced to poverty by the doings of a prodigal son." "How happy am I," said the captain, "that I have been successful in my enterprises, and am returning home to live on my fortune; and from this day I shall bind myself and heirs to supply you with £25 per annum till your death."—*Ladies' Journal.*

Correspondence.

AN ECHO FROM A RAGGED SCHOOL.

Sir,—I never hear any mention made of "Ragged Schools," but my thoughts immediately turn to a circumstance that once made a deep impression on my mind. I always loved your noble Society, but never so much as when I witnessed its practical results. It was one cold damp day last winter, when walking in Church Street, Shoreditch, that I noticed running before me as dirty a child as could anywhere be found. He had no covering for his tiny feet, and perhaps this was the reason why he chose that part of the street which was most muddy, as it was the softest. His clothes (if such they may be called) were indeed "ragged," and he presented a most pitiable appearance.

After a while the little fellow sat himself down in the gutter; a very fit place, thought I, for such a child to enjoy himself! I little thought what sources of pleasure the dear child had. I presently heard a faint voice proceeding from the little infant; I listened, and to my delight I heard him singing—

"Glory, honour, praise, and power,
Be unto the Lamb for ever."

He sang to the end of the verse, and was beginning it again, when turning his head, he saw I was standing near him. I asked, "Where did you learn that pretty verse?" But I could get no answer. Again and again I put the same question, but he appeared frightened, and hung down his head. At last, on my once more asking him where he had been taught to sing, he replied, "At 'chool." Yes, thought I, at a "ragged school" this young immortal has learned to sing his Redeemer's praise, and to render "Glory, honour, praise, and power," to that Lamb of God, of whom very probably his parents know nothing. Would not your excellent Society be accomplishing a great end, if no further good was effected by it than teaching little children songs of praise to their Creator, who would otherwise have their lips filled with profane and vile language?

How true is it, that "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God perfects praise." Surely the songs of angels around the throne could not prove more acceptable than the few feeble notes of a "ragged" child.

I am, Sir, etc., F. D.

A FRAGMENT GATHERED UP.

We have been favoured by a friend with a copy of the following interesting letter, which we are sure must find a response in every Christian heart:—

October 26th, 1850.

My Dear Mrs. B.—By your kind attentions to me yesterday morning, I was not only enabled to reach the station in due season, but to gather up a fragment which may help to fill one of the twelve baskets of the Ragged School, and one that should not be lost. You know my parcel was somewhat clumsy, and the walk a long one; reaching Holborn, I was quite fatigued, when a dirty, half-clad boy, of the age probably of ten or eleven, softly touched me when passing, and in a subdued voice said, "Shall I take your bundle?" His voice and manner touched my heart, and my answer was, I should be glad to give it you, but I have but a penny to spare, and the walk is a long one to Waterloo Bridge, and would not pay you. He dropped his head, paused a moment, took the bundle,

placed it on his shoulder, and walked briskly on, his resolution seeming to say, "A penny is better than idleness and hunger." His clothes wore the signs of a homeless degraded outcast, and his countenance one of good sense, shaded by despondency. Where do you live? "Where I can, I have no home, and when I can get twopence I go to a lodging-house at night." What do you get to eat? "I go to market when I can, and get some potatoes and boil." Where is your father? "Dead, and I have a step-mother, who will not let me stop in the house, and should I ask for anything, she would take the poker and drive me out of the house." You are impudent and disobedient to her, I fear, and that is the reason. "She never would let me stop in the house after father died, three years ago." Can you read? With much animation he responded, "I am a good scholar, I can read and write quite well. I go to a Ragged School in Field Lane." But you lodge in bad company, where you hear much wicked talk. "I do, but I don't much mind it now; I have a piece of a Bible, and every night before I lie down I read two or three chapters, and take no notice of them." Where do you get your clothes washed? "When I had a shirt (I have none now) I washed it myself as well as I could." We reached the bridge, and then I spared a halfpenny more; and right glad was I that you had insisted on my taking a piece of cake, and really wished your kind offer had been accepted of taking a larger piece. And here was another specimen of what has so long been noticed, that whenever I go out with a biscuit or bit of cake, I always have cause to thank God that some mouth more hungry than mine has always been glad of it. This incident is not a marvellous one, but it is an encouraging one; it says to teachers of Ragged Schools, "Go on!" You are sowing beside all waters; you are doing God's work in God's way, and God himself is putting on his sanction. I bless him for that morning's walk; it blew the flame still brighter in my heart, which ever has been burning for that numerous class of neglected ones in every city; and coming, as I did, so fresh from the interesting meeting at Elder Walk, my mind was in a suitable frame to enjoy it. I took the name of this boy, and should I return to London, I intend visiting Field Lane Ragged School, and inquire for Edmund Wellen, and learn more of his character. Say to Mrs. Jackson, from me, that most heartily do I congratulate her on her God-like labour of love. As I stood at that bridge, with that poor orphan boy, I imagined that I saw her standing among the heavenly host, and a company of these *now* ragged boys, clothed in garments white and clean, clustering around her, and saying, You brought my feet to learn of this holy place! O blessed work! to be honoured with the privilege of doing as Christ did. I almost envy her, for much reason have I to shrink into insignificance at my own short-comings in many respects. Though this boy was not one of her gleanings, yet many others are living to bless her, and it is hoped will do so while eternity moves on.

Great peace be on you all, is the sincere desire of your wandering friend,

A. N.

The Children's Gallery.

ELEVEN YEARS WITHOUT A HOME.

A POOR boy lately called upon us, wishing to get into the Westminster Refuge. He had just come out of Tothill Fields Prison, two days before, to which he had been committed for begging. He looked very pale and

wretched — so starved-like. All the clothes he had on consisted of a pair of old trousers, tied round his body, and a thin, worn-out jacket, fastened on with pins. He had neither shirt, shoes, nor stockings; and what was worse, he had not been in a bed, except when in prison, for many months. During the long, cold, dark nights, when other people were sleeping comfortably in their warm homes, this poor lad was crouching under some bridge or dark arch, or shivering on a wet door-step, with his bare feet and limbs exposed to the wind, and without even a shirt to keep him warm! He had been fourteen times in prison, and yet he did not seem a very wicked boy. Once he tried to steal a pair of shoes, for which he got three months in prison; another time he was taken up on suspicion; and once, when almost starving, he stole some soap, and for this he got another three months; and the other eleven times he was put in for begging. Poor boy! his mother was a drunkard, and drunken mothers are often worse than none at all. She killed herself by drinking twelve years ago, and a short time after that his worthless, cruel father, turned him out of doors, leaving him to beg, or steal, or starve. For nearly eleven years he has wandered about in this destitute state, without a home or a friend; sometimes at night, in the vagrant's ward of a workhouse; at other times in prison, or wandering in the streets. Many a time he has stood and looked at the nice cakes and biscuits in the baker's shops, till his eyes filled with tears, when he had not tasted food for more than a day.

He is now in the Juvenile Refuge, where he gets plenty of food, clothes, and a comfortable bed—a master to teach him to read, and another to train him to work. He seems likely to turn out a good boy, and may yet become a useful and respectable man. What a mercy that such places are opened for poor destitute boys; and how very thankful should those children be, whose parents are not drunkards, and who do not *require* to get food and clothing in a Juvenile Refuge! To those who have kind hearts, how very happy and pleasant it is to provide a home for a homeless boy; to make him smile through his tears, and feel how possible it is he may become a man after all, and thus make this weary, wicked world *somewhat* better than it is. Read over this beautiful hymn six times, and then try, as long as you live, to do what it bids you:—

"Let such as feel oppression's load
Thy tender pity share,
And let the helpless, homeless poor,
Be thy peculiar care.

Go bid the hungry orphan be
With thy abundance blest;
Invite the wanderer to thy gate,
And spread the couch of rest.

Let him who pines with piercing cold
By thee be warmed and clad;
Be thine the blissful task to make
The downcast mourner glad.

Then bright as morning shall come forth
In peace and joy thy days;
And glory from the Lord above
Shall shine on all thy ways."
Isa. lviii. 6—9.

THE LITTLE BEGGAR.

"I'm a poor little beggar, my mother is dead;
My father is ill, and can give me no bread:
O'er London's wide streets all the day long I roam,
And when night comes on I've got never a home.
I'm a poor little, etc.

"I would not be idle, like some wicked boys,
So I got me a basket with trinkets and toys;
Nobody was e'er more industrious than I,
Nobody more willing to sell if you'll buy.
I'm a poor little, etc.

"In summer gay flowers and nosegays I sell,
Sweet cowslips, and roses, and jasmines, to smell;
Water-cresses for breakfast, fresh-gathered and green,
From bad weeds and hemlock pick'd careful and clean.
I'm a poor little, etc.

"But alas! 'tis in vain that I mournfully cry,
And hold out my basket to all who pass by:
I fancy they're thinking of other affairs,
For they pay never a notice to me or my wares.
I'm a poor little, etc.

"Oh had I a coat, if it were ever so old,
This poor trembling body to screen from the cold;
Or a hat, from the weather to shelter my head;
Or an old pair of shoes, or a morsel of bread.
I'm a poor little, etc.

"In the evening I wander, all hungry and cold,
And the bright Christmas fire through the windows behold;
Ah, while the gay circles such comforts enjoy,
They think not of me, a poor perishing boy!
I'm a poor little, etc."

A PENNY AND A POUND.

THEY say that "a penny is the seed of a pound," and James Turner found it to be true. James set up a missionary box, and put in it a penny to begin with. No sooner was this known, than

his father and mother put in sixpence a-piece to encourage him. When Uncle Thomas called, he popped in a shilling at once; and with one and another giving a trifle every week, when the box came to be opened at the end of the quarter, it was found to contain a pound. "Let this be a lesson to you," said James's father to him.

VALUE OF PITY.

A POOR man one day accidentally backed his horse and cart over a precipice. Many persons were there, and pitied him very much. All seemed to feel for him, but would probably have gone away without giving him any substantial proof of their sympathy, when a kind-hearted practical man, who was in the crowd, pulling off his hat, put into it two sovereigns, and passing it round the crowd, said, "Well, we all pity this poor man, some more and some less; now I pity him two pounds, how much do you pity him?"

Intelligence.

PUBLIC SYMPATHY NOT ALWAYS PRACTICAL.—ELDER WALK RAGGED SCHOOL, ISLINGTON.

FOR some years past, it has been customary for every Ragged School to have its annual Public Meeting, its Report publicly read, and "a number of ministers and gentlemen" brought together to advocate its claims. At the outset this was important and highly beneficial; the meetings were well attended; speeches, spirited and instructive, followed by a good collection, sufficient to pay all the expenses of the meeting, and leave a balance of ten or twelve pounds in favour of the school. But so numerous have these meetings become of late, that it is not always easy to obtain an adequate supply of speakers and chairmen. Those who have "given themselves wholly to the work," find that it requires no ordinary versatility of mind to produce fresh material for every fresh demand. Even our Noble Chairman, and Mr. Payne himself, have, we believe, been often put to their wits, in preparing so many sermons from one and the same text, and in some cases delivered to nearly the same auditory. Another and greater evil is being felt, in people becoming less liberal than they were; in some cases scarcely leaving as much behind them as pay for the evening's entertainment. The truth is, a "glut" is being created in the Ragged-School-Meeting-Market, which, if not carefully managed, will prove detrimental to its interests. We must protect the public platform from abuse, or it will soon be shorn of its power. Not only in connection with Ragged Schools, but in other kindred movements is this caution necessary. Public meetings in all quarters and at all seasons—ill-arranged and uninteresting statements—unpremeditated and pointless speeches, (idle extempore verbiage,) "conveyed as if on the homœopathic principle—a millionth part medicine, and the rest water;" these are becoming the staple of our public platforms—Exeter Hall not excepted—an evil which is threatening with impotency one of the most powerful instruments for good that we possess.

We have neither space nor time at present to enter fully into this subject. The thoughts we have hastily expressed were suggested by a meeting we lately attended of the Elder Walk Ragged School. It was convened by a private circular, sent to the *Friends and Subscribers to the School;* who, when assembled in the neat and comfortable school-room, numbered about fifty. Tea was provided, the expense of which was defrayed by the gift of one of the Subscribers, and a few sixpences left by the guests when retiring. No long and weary speeches were made, for none were needed. They did not require to make provision for those morbid sentimentalists who attend *all* the meetings in their own neighbourhoods; as ready to laugh with those who laugh, as to weep with those who weep; and who manifest their sympathy for the perishing poor by leaving behind them one of the smallest coins in the realm, drying up their tears, and forgetting their responsibilities. Those present were true and tried friends of the school. They

came for the purpose of knowing their duties more fully, that they might be able to perform them more faithfully, by contributing to its support themselves, and commending it to the attention of their acquaintances and friends. The expenses of getting up this meeting did not exceed a few shillings; but we believe it will prove of more permanent benefit to the school than some public meetings involving a heavy expenditure. The Annual Report was read by Mr. Harris, the zealous and indefatigable Secretary, to whose exertions the school owes not a little of its present prosperity. We regret that our space will not allow us to give so copious an extract of the Report as we wish; but we cannot refrain from noticing one important department of labour, in which we take a deep interest, as we trust it may prove useful to those who have not yet adopted it. "Other agencies are at work," says the Report, "and among these honourable mention must be made of the '*Mothers' Meeting, and Clothing Society*,' which may be said to have enlisted the poor themselves in this labour of love. 'It was thought,' says the brief report of this excellent auxiliary, 'that if the mothers could be induced to meet together at stated times, a little kind friendly advice could be given, as to the best mode of training their children, both for this life and that which is to come.' Then came the plan by which they were assisted to procure, and taught to repair, cut, and make their own garments. To this Society the poor people, in pennies and two-pences per week, have subscribed, since the commencement, £5. 1*s*. 9*d*.; and there has been contributed, from kind friends, £5. 16*s*. 6*d*.; making a total of £10. 18*s*. 3*d*. With the aid of these funds, the poor have been enabled to make sixty-three garments; and there has been supplied to them seventy-four yards of sheeting, one hundred and eight yards of calico, and various other articles. Time has been saved, habits of industry acquired. The school-room has been enlarged during the year, in which there is now a daily attendance of about one hundred and twenty children."

The friends of Ragged Schools must learn to depend less upon outward, and more upon *practical* manifestations of friendship, in connection with their work. "It's not all gold that glitters," nor is it all true sympathy which is heard in noisy applause, or is seen radiant in a sentimental tear!

KING EDWARD'S RAGGED SCHOOLS.

On Tuesday, November 5th, the foundation stone of this new building was laid in Albert Street, Spicer Street, Spitalfields, by T. Beauchamp Proctor, Esq. The proceedings commenced by singing and prayer. Mr. H. R. Williams, honorary secretary, read the report, of which the following is a brief extract:—

"The Right Hon. Lord Ashley presided, in November, 1846, at the opening of premises in Spring Gardens, King Edward Street, where the Ragged School is at present conducted, the average attendance being about two hundred. But, during the winter months, the applicants for admission have been far more numerous than could be received. The Committee have been under the necessity of refusing many of the most degraded class of society, who would have placed themselves under a course of moral discipline and improvement. Hence the necessity for the present building. The Committee, after much anxious searching and endeavouring to obtain a suitable locality, at last succeeded in purchasing the present freehold site, measuring eighty feet by one hundred and ten feet, for £600. The building in course of erection will contain three stories, each measuring sixty feet by thirty-two feet. The basement floor will consist of an Infant School and bath-room, with wash-house, kitchen, scullery, and laundry for the girls. In order to secure good ventilation, the rooms are to be sixteen feet in height. It is intended to provide dormitory accommodation for forty entirely destitute children. The contract for the building is £2,464; but the whole outlay for the proper completion of the works will be not less than £3,500. Towards this sum the Committee have received only £1,387. 1*s*. 10*d*., leaving a balance of more than £2,100 yet to be collected."

BLACKBURN AND BURT, PRINTERS, 90½, HOLBORN HILL, LONDON.